

California Statewide Screening Collaborative

What is the California Statewide Screening Collaborative (CSSC)?

The CSSC brings together state agencies, organizations, and special initiatives that focus on California's capacity to promote and deliver effective and well-coordinated health, developmental, and early mental health screenings for young children, birth to age 5. CSSC's goals are to:

1. Improve coordination among state agencies and programs involved in early identification and recognition and response activities to support the development of young children.
2. Promote the use of standardized screening tools, effective screening protocols, and increased communication among agencies and services.
3. Identify screening resources and funding and follow-up supports that promote healthy early childhood development, school readiness, positive parent-child relationships, and access to services.

What Are Current CSSC Activities?

The goals of the CSSC are addressed through quarterly meetings, a listserv, and small work groups. Primary activities include:

- Development of a website and a web-based screening toolkit for use by California health care professionals and early care and education providers (www.first5ecmh.org).
- Promotion of the use of validated developmental screening instruments through dissemination of information, resources, and publisher discounts on commonly used screening tools for California providers.
- Partnerships with health agencies and health care providers to clarify Medi-Cal and other health insurance procedures as well as factors that enhance the ability of providers to conduct, and to be reimbursed for, developmental screenings in a timely manner.
- Clarification of Medi-Cal and other health insurance reimbursement programs and procedures to access needed funds and increase the number of developmental screenings conducted by health care providers.
- Coordination with the California Chapters of the American Academy of Pediatrics to provide information, outreach, and education about the availability of developmental screening resources and the benefits of early identification of children with health, developmental, and/or social-emotional difficulties.
- Coordination with the California Department of Public Health/Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health Program (CDPH/MCAH) Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems grant, Project LAUNCH, and other screening initiatives to address common goals and challenges across systems.

Developmental screening is the administration of a brief standardized tool aiding the identification of children at risk of a developmental disorder. The AAP recommends developmental screening at 9, 18, and 24 or 30 months or whenever a parent or provider concern is expressed.

—American Academy of Pediatrics



Why Was the CSSC Established?

CDPH/MCAH convened the CSSC in September 2007 as an activity of the California Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems grant. This federally funded grant strives to build and implement a statewide system that supports the development of a statewide system that supports the development of healthy children who are ready to learn.

Additional state and national projects, and other special initiatives, became contributors and supporters of the CSSC as they demonstrated the effectiveness of early identification through early developmental screening. The work of three of these projects has had a major impact on the work of the CSSC:

✂ **Achieving Better Child Health and Development (ABCD) Screening Academy:** California was one of 20 states selected to participate in this nationally acclaimed project funded by the Commonwealth Foundation through the National Academy of State Health Programs to identify specific state-supported strategies for improving the early identification of young children with developmental delays and special needs.

✂ **First 5 California Special Needs Project:** First 5 California made a five-year investment to improve school readiness, early screening, coordination of services, and inclusion of young children with special needs in 10 local demonstration sites across the state.

✂ **Early Childhood Mental Health Project:** The California First 5 Association coordinated a strategic planning project that focused on identifying the systemic barriers to, and solutions for, the delivery and funding of mental health services for young children and their families. This effort was funded by the California Endowment with support from First 5 California.

Which Agencies/Organizations Currently Support the CSSC?

The CSSC is supported through facilitation and technical assistance provided by First 5 California, the California Department of Public Health, Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Program, and the WestEd Center for Prevention and Early Intervention (CPEI).

Participating agencies and organizations include both state and local public and private entities concerned with early childhood health, mental health, child development, developmental disabilities, and social services.

Who May I Contact for More Information?

California Department of Public Health, Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health Program

Janet Hill or Laurel Cima
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First 5 California

Mike Fuller or Sarah Neville-Morgan
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WestEd CPEI

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Comprehensive developmental screening is a process that allows providers to collaborate with parents to monitor, describe, and discuss all domains of a child's development. Screening should not be just regarded as a point-in-time test but as an ongoing process, and a key preventive service that parents can expect and anticipate as regularly as immunizations and well-child physical examinations.

—Ounce of Prevention 2006, Incorporating Comprehensive Developmental Screening into Programs and Services for Young Children